

VLR-10/17/72 NRHP-4/24/73

Form 10-300
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Virginia	
COUNTY: Middlesex	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

1. NAME

COMMON:
Lower Church

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
.1 mile South of Rt. 33. .4 mile West of intersection with Rt. 626.

CITY OR TOWN:
Hartfield Vicinity (Thomas N. Downing, First District Congressman)

STATE Virginia	CODE 51	COUNTY: Middlesex	CODE 119
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3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Sits <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> Government	<input type="checkbox"/> Park	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Comments
<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religious		
<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific		

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
Congregation (The Reverend James Hain)

STREET AND NUMBER:
Lower Church

CITY OR TOWN: Hartfield	STATE: Virginia	CODE: 51
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5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Middlesex County Court House

STREET AND NUMBER:
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CITY OR TOWN: Saluda	STATE: Virginia	CODE: 51
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6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
Historic American Buildings Survey Inventory

DATE OF SURVEY: **1959** Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
Library of Congress

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Washington	STATE: D.C.	CODE: 11
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SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: **Virginia**

COUNTY: **Middlesex**

ENTRY NUMBER

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)				
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins
	(Check One)		(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Lower Church stands along the edge of a wood south of Route 3 and 33 less than a mile east of Hartfield post office in Middlesex County. The rectangular brick building measures 56' x 34' excluding a brick porch on the west facade and a frame chancel recess covered with brick on the east. A modern brick hip roofed addition adjoins on the south, and is connected to the main structure by a brick passageway. The distinctive roof features clipped gables and a kick at the eaves; there is a simple wood box cornice. The walls are rather roughly laid in English bond with random glazing of headers and stretchers above and below the bevelled watertable. The bricks, varying in mellow colors, are large, and the walls are almost 27" thick. Queen closers mark the corners of the building and the jambs of all the openings. A brick found on the left of the west doorway is marked "17A15"; this is taken to indicate the completion of the walls to that height by 1715. The "A" may represent Captain Henry Armistead, one of the builders. A brick on the right side of that doorway is marked "I:W", which may stand for James Walker, an overseer for the vestry. Other initials are a "B" incised on the east, and "IG" and "TG" on the north. There are three windows, 5' x 11', with rounded arches on both the north and south sides, two small windows on each side of the recessed chancel and an elliptical window high in the west gable. The large side windows have probably been lengthened one or two courses. A door opens in the west facade and another between the two easternmost windows on the south side. The details of the original south doorway are now covered by the passageway leading to the addition. Although much of the arch of the west doorway is covered by the later brick porch, it seems to have been segmental.

The original colonial interior was characterized by a rood screen in front of the chancel; this has been lost in subsequent alterations. Presently there is a raised chancel in the east end containing the colonial communion plate and linen chest now used as an altar, and a chancel recess framed by a lancet arch. A set-back appears in the wall above the gallery in the west. A partition with shallow pilasters supporting segmental arches under the gallery divides the vestibule from the sanctuary. The window heads and jambs are splayed, and there are window seats under each large window. The walls are wainscoted with tongue-and-groove panelling and plastered. The three plane ceiling with cove has tongue-and-groove panelling.

The church at present is undergoing some repairs including the installation of a new lighting system and the removal of the west porch.

G. H.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian | 16th Century | 18th Century | 20th Century
 15th Century | 17th Century | 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) **1717**

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religion/Phi- | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Philosophy | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Human- | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> ifarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

In 1710, the vestry of Christ Church Parish ordered the construction of three new church buildings including the present Lower Church, to be used as chapels of ease for the parish. After some contention, the vestry decided on the dimension of Lower Church by this order: "This Vestry taking into Consideration the Dimensions of the Lower Chappel mentioned in former Orders of Vestry not being Uniforme It is therefore Ordered that the said Chappel be built two and fifty foot long in the cleare and Thirty foot wide in the cleare, . . . (and) That the s^d Chappel be built in the same place where the Old one now stands." The old church mentioned as being on the site was the church of Peanckatanck Parish, united in 1666 with Lancaster Parish to form Christ Church Parish. Following the union, Peanckatanck Church became a chapel of ease, known as Lower Chapel for Christ Church.

The new building was built by Captain Henry Armistead and Major Edmund Berkeley, and was ready for use be October 25, 1717. The Reverend Bartholomew lead the first service. It apparently was abandoned by the Episcopalians after the Disestablishment, and is said to have been used as a school by the Methodists and Baptists. Legend has it that it was bought by a member of the Methodist congregation in 1857, and presented by him to that denomination. In any case, the building has served as a Methodist Church since that date.

Lower Church is distinctive architecturally. Besides Augusta Stone Church, Augusta County, it is Virginia's only colonial church to retain its clipped gable roof, although several other existing churches are known to have possessed this feature. It also is one of the few colonial churches to be laid entirely in English bond brickwork. An interesting tomb, dating from 1687, and originally located in the first Lower Chapel, has been incorporated in the present building just in front of the south doorway. Two other colonial tombs, dating 1726 and 1727, lie just east of the chancel. The church owns an interesting wooden chest, believed to date from 1677 (and known always to have been in the present building) which is used to store communion plate and linen. The church's original communion silver was given in 1722, and is now owned by St. Paul's Church, Richmond, having been purchased in 1846.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Mason, George Carrington, Colonial Churches of Tidewater Virginia.
Richmond: Whittet and Shepperson, 1945.

Rawlings, James Scott, Virginia's Colonial Churches. Richmond: Garrett
and Massie, 1963.

Rose, Harold Wickliffe, The Colonial Houses of Worship in America. New
York: Hastings House, 1963.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	37 ° 33 ' 15 "	76 ° 27 ' 40 "				
NE	37 ° 33 ' 15 "	76 ° 27 ' 28 "				
SE	37 ° 33 ' 05 "	76 ° 27 ' 28 "				
SW	37 ° 33 ' 05 "	76 ° 27 ' 40 "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **10 acres**

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES:

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Staff

ORGANIZATION: **Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission** DATE: **August, 1972**

STREET AND NUMBER:
Room 1116, Ninth Street State Office Building

CITY OR TOWN: **Richmond** STATE: **Virginia** CODE: **51**

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name _____

Title **J. R. Fishburne, Director**
Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission

Date _____

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date _____

ATTEST: _____

Keeper of The National Register

Date _____

U.S.G.S. 7½' quadrangle (scale:1:24,000)
Wilton, Va. 1964

LOWER CHURCH
latitude
NW37°33'15"
NE37°33'15"
SE37°33'05"
SW37°33'05"
longitude
76°27'40"
76°27'28"
76°27'28"
76°27'40"

